BRITISH COLUMBIA | BCStats

Infoline

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- **Prices in B.C. rose 0.5% in March**
- **Wholesale sales in B.C. increased 0.2% in February**
- **The number of E.I. beneficiaries in B.C. fell 1.4% in February**

Prices

- **British Columbia's year-over-year inflation rate was 0.5% in March, with higher prices for food (+2.5%) driving much of the increase.** Excluding food prices, the Consumer Price Index (CPI) rose 0.1%. Consumers also paid more for household operations & furnishings (+2.7%) and clothing & footwear (+0.8%), but prices fell in the five remaining major components of the CPI.

Grocery bills (+2.5%) and restaurant prices (+2.6%) continued to rise. Fresh vegetable (+9.2%) and fruit (+14.0%) prices surged, increasing for the second month in a row. Prices for coffee & tea (+4.2%), meat (+2.3%), fish & other seafood (+2.2%), and dairy products & eggs (+0.6%) remained on the upswing, while consumers paid less for non-alcoholic beverages (-6.2%) and other food products (-0.8%).

The cost of shelter (-0.6%) continued to decline, a result of lower costs associated with owned accommodation (-1.7%), as rented accommodation (+1.5%) and utility (+1.9%) prices continued to rise.

Transportation prices dipped (-0.1%), as consumers paid less for gasoline (-0.6%) and public transit (-1.1%). Health & personal care (-0.2%) prices fell for the fourth consecutive month, while recreation, education & reading (-0.8%) prices were down for the first time in eight months. Prices for alcoholic beverages and tobacco were virtually unchanged.

B.C. (+0.5%) recorded the lowest inflation rate in Canada, well below the national figure (+1.0%), while Manitoba (+2.3%) recording the largest jump. In Vancouver (+0.8%) and Victoria (+0.2%), prices remained relatively stable. *Data Source: Statistics Canada*

The Economy

- **B.C. manufacturing shipments edged up 0.3% (*seasonally adjusted*) in February, following a 2.2% increase in the previous month.** Shipments were up in the durables sector (+2.7%), bolstered by a gain in wood manufacturing (+10.0%), the largest industry in the durable sector, and increases in shipments by producers of computer & electronic products (+17.6%), transportation equipment (+5.3%), and furniture & related products (+0.4%). The primary metals industry posted a notable decline (-8.0%), as did machinery (-6.9%). Producers of non-metallic minerals (-1.6%) and fabricated metals (-0.6%) recorded more moderate contractions. Shipments by manufacturers of electrical equipment & appliances were unchanged from the previous month. A decline in the non-durables sector (-2.6%) was a result of a decrease in shipments by producers of clothing (-20.6%), plastics & rubber (-4.1%), chemicals (-0.3%), and food (-0.1%). Manufacturers of paper (+0.7%) and printing & related products (+0.7%) saw slight increases.

Nationally, Canadian manufacturers saw factory sales rise 2.6% in February, following two months of declines, recording the largest increase since July 2011. New Brunswick (+18.0%) and PEI (+4.4%) led the nation in terms of growth, followed by Manitoba (+3.7%), Ontario (+3.3%), Quebec (+3.1%), Saskatchewan (+1.4%), Alberta (+0.7%), and

Did you know...

Three-in-five (60%) Canadians support protecting the environment, even if it risks hampering economic growth, notably higher than American (49%) and British (44%) respondents.

Source: Angus Reid

B.C. (+0.3%). Newfoundland (-32.8%) and Nova Scotia (-2.6%) were the only provinces to see declines. *Data Source: Statistics Canada*

- **B.C. wholesale sales edged up 0.2% (*seasonally adjusted*) in February, rising for the third month in a row.** Nationally, wholesale sales were flat, following a 0.5% increase in January. Seven provinces recorded higher sales, but a 1.1% decline in Ontario, along with lower sales in Nova Scotia (-1.5%) and New Brunswick (-1.5%) offset gains recorded in other parts of Canada. Wholesalers in PEI (+6.2%) and Saskatchewan (+5.3%) had the highest growth, followed by Newfoundland & Labrador (+2.2%), Alberta (+2.0%), Manitoba (+0.3%), Quebec (+0.5%), and B.C. (+0.2%). *Data Source: Statistics Canada*

- **The sales value of new motor vehicles in British Columbia accelerated gently (+0.1% *seasonally adjusted*) in February.** The rise was entirely due to an increase in sales of vehicles manufactured overseas (+1.8%), as North American vehicle purchases fell 5.3%. Consumer demand was up for domestic cars (+2.7%) and foreign trucks (+12.3%), resulting in a rise in overall car sales (+1.1%), and a decline in overall truck sales (-6.5%).

Data Source: Statistics Canada

- **The number of traveller entries to Canada via B.C. dipped 0.5% (*seasonally adjusted*) in February, after recording two consecutive months of increases.** A decrease in both overnight (-1.0%) and same-day (-2.6%) visitor entries from the United States resulted in an overall decline of 1.6%, the largest contraction recorded since May 2012. Entries from overseas were up (+2.9%) following a drop (-1.7%) in the previous month. This was chiefly due to an increase in the number of visitor entries originating in Asia (+9.6%), as entries from Europe (-2.2%) and the rest of the world (-3.5%) fell. The number of Canadian residents returning from abroad rose 3.5%, with re-entries originating in the U.S. (+3.6%) and the rest of the world (+3.2%) both on the rise. *Data Source: Statistics Canada*

- **The number of British Columbians receiving regular employment insurance (EI) benefits fell 1.4% (*seasonally adjusted*) to 54,940 in February.** The group of recipients aged 15 to 24 years old saw the largest decline (-2.0%), dropping to 5,450. The number of recipients aged 25 to 54 years (-1.5%) and the 55 years and over (-1.0%) also contracted. Nationally, the number of EI beneficiaries was down slightly (-0.5%). Total recipients declined in every province except Ontario (+0.7%). *Data Source: Statistics Canada*

First Quarter in Review

- **Investment in non-residential buildings in B.C. climbed to nearly $1.5 billion (+2.1%, *seasonally adjusted*) in the first quarter.** Spending on new industrial (+14.5%) buildings in the province was strong, and commercial (+0.1%) and institutional & government (+0.9%) building investment edged up slightly. Non-residential building construction activity was robust in Vancouver (+4.0%), rising to $885 million. However, investment declined in Kelowna (-8.8% to $41 million), Abbotsford-Mission (-8.3% to $44 million), and Victoria (-7.0% to $93 million).

Nationally, non-residential construction expenditures rose 1.0% in the first quarter, to $12.4 billion, marking the fifth consecutive quarterly gain. Higher levels of industrial (+2.5%) and commercial (+1.2%) investment were behind the increase, while institutional spending contracted slightly (-0.3%). Four provinces recorded gains, with Quebec (+6.5%) accounting for the largest share of the increase, followed by Alberta (+1.4%), B.C. (+2.1%), and Manitoba (+7.0%).

Data Source: Statistics Canada

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For data originating from Statistics Canada, data sourced to 'Statistics Canada' has been retrieved from CANSIM, the agency's electronic database; otherwise the source is identified as 'SC' plus the catalogue number.

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BC at a glance . . .

POPULATION (thousands)	Jan 1/2013	% change on one year ago
BC	4,639.9	0.8
Canada	35,056.1	1.1
GDP and INCOME (Released Nov 19)		
(BC - at market prices)	2011	% change on one year ago
Gross Domestic Product (GDP) *($ millions)*	217,749	4.5
GDP *($ 2007 millions)*	206,180	2.8
GDP *($ 2007 per Capita)*	45,083	1.8
Household Sector Disposable Income *($ 2007 per Capita)*	26,788	0.9
TRADE ($ millions, seasonally adjusted)		% change on prev. month
Manufacturing Shipments - Feb 2013	3,270	0.3
Merchandise Exports - Feb 2013	2,651	-1.9
Retail Sales - Jan 2013	5,118	1.0
CONSUMER PRICE INDEX	% change on	12-month avg
(all items - Mar 2013)	one year ago	% change
BC	0.5	0.8
Vancouver	0.8	1.1
Victoria	0.2	0.7
Canada	1.0	1.2
LABOUR FORCE (thousands)		% change on
(seasonally adjusted)	Mar 2013	prev. month
Jobs Created (-Lost) - BC	-14.8	
Labour Force - BC	2,475.7	0.1
Employed - BC	2,302.6	-0.6
Unemployed - BC	173.1	11.9
		Feb 2013
Unemployment Rate - BC *(percent)*	7.0	6.3
Unemployment Rate - Canada *(percent)*	7.2	7.0
INTEREST RATES (percent)	Apr 17/2013	Apr 18/2012
Prime Business Rate	3.00	3.00
Conventional Mortgages - 1 year	3.00	3.20
- 5 year	5.14	5.44
US-CANADA EXCHANGE RATE	Apr 17/2013	Apr 18/2012
(avg. noon spot rate) Cdn $ per US $	1.0262	0.9902
(closing rate) US $ per Cdn $	0.9741	1.0088
AVERAGE WEEKLY WAGE RATE		% change on
(industrial aggregate - dollars)	Mar 2013	one year ago
BC	868.14	1.1
Canada	879.01	2.2

SOURCES:

Population, Gross Domestic Product, Trade, Prices, Labour Force, Wage Rate } Statistics Canada

Interest Rates, Exchange Rates: Bank of Canada Weekly Financial Statistics

For latest Weekly Financial Statistics see www.bankofcanada.ca

2011 Census Profiles

We have added files for Health geographies, School Districts, College Regions and Ministry of Children and Family Development Regions. The file layout matches the other 2011 Profiles, simplifying comparisons to many areas . See more: http://www.bcstats.gov.bc.ca/StatisticsBySubject/Census/OpenData.aspx

Provincial Electoral District Profiles 2011

Posted to our Open Data page is a 2011 Census Profile for the Provincial Electoral Districts. The file layout matches the other 2011 Profiles, simplifying comparisons to many areas . See more: http://www.bcstats.gov.bc.ca/StatisticsBySubject/Census/OpenData.aspx

Population Estimates by Age and Sex 2012

Updated population estimates by age and sex for B.C. sub-provincial regions are now available. . . See more: http://www.bcstats.gov.bc.ca/StatisticsBySubject/Demography/PopulationEstimates.aspx

B.C. Fisheries and Aquaculture Sector

The 2012 edition of the profile of British Columbia's fisheries and aquaculture sector is now available. See more: http://www.bcstats.gov.bc.ca/AboutUs/News/13-01-29/British_Columbia_s_Fisheries_and_Aquaculture_Sector.aspx

Municipal Population Estimates 2012

Population estimates for B.C. municipalities and regional districts as of July 1, 2012 are now available. See more: http://www.bcstats.gov.bc.ca/StatisticsBySubject/Demography/PopulationEstimates.aspx

Released last week by BC Stats

- Consumer Price Index, March 2013

To Release this week

- Business Indicators, April, 2013

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